

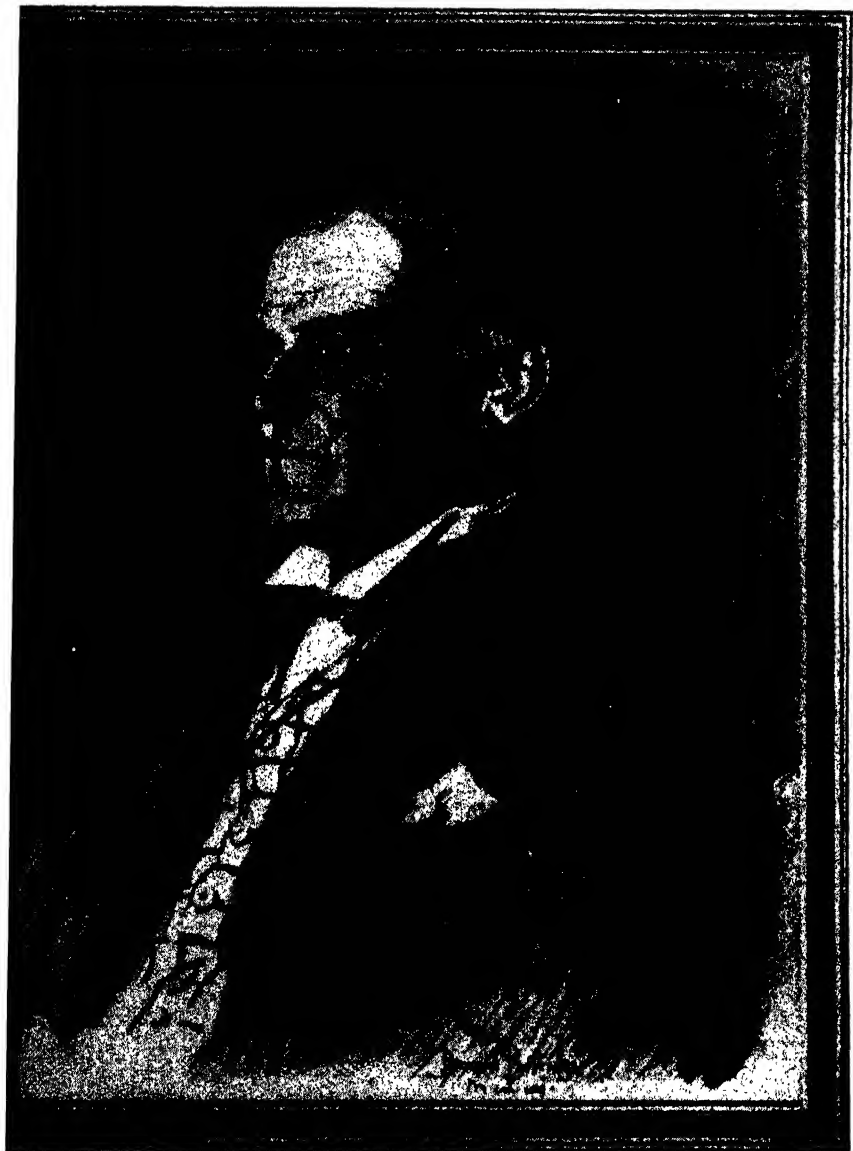
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THE AUTHOR

FROM THE PORTRAIT BY SIR BERNARD PARTRIDGE.

FAMOUS VICTORIANS I HAVE KNOWN.

Famous Victorians I Have Known

BY

The Hon.

Stephen Coleridge

LONDON
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, LIMITED

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WESTERN MAIL LIMITED.

1928

Printed in Great Britain.

*To
the Memory of my Father,
a famous Victorian.*

BOOKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

Memories.

Songs to Desideria.

Vivisection—A Heartless Science.

An Evening in my Library among the
English Poets.

Great Testimony.

The Idolatry of Science.

Letters to my Grandson :

(1) on the World about him

(2) on the Happy Life

(3) on Poetry

(4) on Prose.

The Chobham Book of English Prose.

Quiet Hours in the Temple.

Quiet Hours in Poets' Corner.

Digressions.

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PREFACE.

There is a class of mind that always regards the newest thing as the best. "Time's noblest offspring is the last," said Bishop Berkeley, flattering the Americans.

Perhaps some of us fall into the opposite extreme and estimate everything as good, because it is old. I suppose the passage of time settles this matter finally and irrevocably. Every effort and work of man that is not finely and nobly achieved goes down at last into oblivion.

The universal education of these present times has, I believe, a tendency to bring literary work to something of a dead level, bringing up, indeed, everyone from illiteracy, but depressing the elevations of genius. Of old, men wrote with deliberation, reflection, and exceeding care in the hope of filling an enduring place in literature, but to-day all roads of penmanship lead to journalism, which, on the morrow, lights the fire or encircles groceries.

Only those who possess an indestructible reverence for letters will give to journalism what deserves to survive and to be treasured. Men and women of to-day have even lost the concentration of attention necessary for the perusal of more than short snippets in their morning newspaper, and inducement to supply them with anything better gradually fades from all but the most ardent souls who write worthily because their self-criticism compels.

In the quiet leisurely times of the great Queen, the writers who ruled in England were ripe scholars whose work had the depth and substance which are only to be produced far from the hurry and impatience which necessarily accompanies journalism.

“Well,” someone may say, “but are you not yourself a journalist?” Yes, it seems that at the moment I am, but from this flat plain upon which I am fated to live I can still look up with enthusiastic admiration and reverence to the distant hills of God which I myself can never climb.

Of the dwellers on those heights at whose feet I sat in youth the *Western Mail* has allowed me to speak, and if I can induce in my readers something of my own respect and affection for them I shall not have written in vain.*

* Many of these papers have appeared in the *Western Mail*.

SEVENTH EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.

THE Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury devoted a long and truly glorious life to the service of the helpless; helpless children, helpless women, helpless animals.

It was my precious privilege to be admitted to his gracious friendship in my earlier days, and it was at his feet I learned to do what I could in a very humble way to combat the cruelties of the world about us.

It was through his splendid efforts that women ceased to drag trucks on all fours along the galleries of coal mines with a chain between their legs, labouring like slaves for a mere pittance. He roused and stung the conscience of the country against little children being set to labour long hours in stifling factories that mill owners might make fortunes—little children of six, seven, and eight, who had never seen a green field

or plucked a wild flower, and if they ever looked up to Heaven could see no blue sky, but only evil smoke clouds that rained black filth on everything that made their little world.

He protested, and at last not in vain, against little boys being driven up chimneys till their knees were bleeding and their throats choked with soot, who sometimes fell and were maimed for life, who were the trembling slaves of brutal sweeps who made their money out of their sufferings.

Even after such treatment of the little boys was made illegal, it still went on for some time, and I can myself remember a little black creature being given a cup of milk in the nursery at 26, Park-crescent, where my grandfather lived, and his leaving the black marks of his soot-covered lips on the cup.

Strange it may seem, and, indeed, infinitely sad, that in all his efforts for the amelioration of the lot of his fellow-countrymen and women and of little children, he worked in a kind of

splendid isolation from the statesmen and divines of his age. John Bright, the great orator and tribune of the people, never assisted him by word or deed in all these his philanthropic enterprises. Gladstone, whose passionate sympathy could be roused to express itself in flights of immortal eloquence over the woes of distant Bulgarians, never said a word or lifted a finger to mitigate the sorrows of his small fellow-countrymen or enslaved fellow-countrywomen in the next street.

No Archbishop of Canterbury brought himself and his church into line with this great soldier of Christ. Alone, as far as the clergy were concerned, he fought, and to him alone is the glory of the victories he won.

When a few good men met together to found the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, at a little meeting in the drawing-room of the Lord Mayor of London, no archbishop, no bishop, no clergyman of the Church of England was there. The Rev. Benjamin

Waugh, Lord Shaftesbury, Cardinal Manning, the Chief Justice of England, and one or two others started on that afternoon the great society that has since covered England with its protecting wings and brought a thousand thousand children up out of misery, agony, and infamy, into safety, purity, and at least some measure of happiness. I was at that memorable gathering myself, admitted to it as the Chief Justice's secretary.

When the National Anti-Vivisection Society was founded Lord Shaftesbury was active in its inauguration, became its president, and was still its president when he died, and was ever ready with his wide sympathies and ripe judgment in the guidance of its activities.

Not only did he ever strive to assist the poor and helpless, but, perceiving that physical squalor must inevitably produce spiritual squalor, he realised that if men were to be led to think cleanly and live decent lives they must, before all else, be enabled to possess clean and decent homes.

Never was enthusiastic goodness so illumined and inspired by wisdom and knowledge of the world.

Others of his illustrious family in times past served their country and the State with honour in great public offices, but none of them had throughout a long life served their fellow creatures and laboured for them with no other motive than the desire to bind up their wounds and bring them up out of darkness into the benign light of God's services.

It was my happiness to be permitted to visit him at any time when I needed advice at his house on the West side of Grosvenor-square, where he lived in august surroundings, but with a personal austerity.

To walk the streets of London in his company was to discover that every cabman and costermonger seemed to know him by sight, and would take off his cap to him, and the poor folk in the East End knew his tall figure and benign countenance better than did the

gentlemen who looked out of club windows in the West.

In the House of Lords he was accorded a very unique respect, and a very special courtesy was extended to him which permitted him to retain a particular seat independently of the change of parties. This was, I think, a very beautiful and worthy tribute to his revered character, which, as far as I am aware, has not been paid to anyone else, at least in modern times.

He was born and lived at a period when among the ancient nobility of England it was customary for rank to recognise its duties, and, in consequence, to receive more homage than is the custom at the present day. In those earlier Victorian times the people believed, and generally rightly believed, that peerages were conferred on men for meritorious and noble services to their country, and that those who inherited them were brought up to recognise the large obligations of their station.

Strident rumour now asserts that peerages were conferred during a recent administration for other and less lofty services to the State, and the fine flavour of the peerage of England has consequently suffered a sad decay.

Lord Shaftesbury succeeded in achieving his great ends less by commanding abilities than by sheer weight of character.

He lived in a time of great men in all walks of life—in the fields of poetry, philosophy, statesmanship, and letters. But no one in his time did more for the actual happiness of his fellow men.

His life will remain one of the glories of his age and times. The beautiful monument to his memory in Piccadilly circus, at the end of the fine street named after him, which records that he was “an example to his order,” has been taken away by the London County Council, and no one knows whether it will ever be replaced.

Mr. Bumble may abolish his monument in the Circus, but in the pages of history his name will not readily be blotted out.

JOHN RUSKIN.

IT is difficult for me to speak in measured criticism of Ruskin, for beyond all the writers of the nineteenth century he seems to me to reach and sustain a supreme note of nobility.

When it is remembered that he lived and strived for the things that are lovely and of good repute in the age of an abounding material triumph and a dominating commercial spirit, that his was the spiritual voice of one crying in the arid wilderness of wealth worship, that the men about him built the Cromwell Road, and the women about him wore crinolines, he stands out a lonely but splendid figure, leading men away from the sordid ambitions and low ideals of the age and pointing always upwards to the glory of God's world wherever man had not defaced it, and to the imperishable kingdom of beauty.

His soul revolted at the horrible concomitants of industrial England ; at the vast

agglomeration of men and women in squalid streets of houses that repeat in dreary iteration the last ultimate note of brutal ugliness; at the multitude of children reared in such soul destroying surroundings, with no fields to play in and no blue sky above them; at the mind destroying factories wherein men and women lived their lives amid the din of whirring wheels and cogs and wagging machinery, that jiggled the same horrible jiggle all day long, creating some wretched piece of thingumbob by the million in hideous sickening iteration, and all this suffered and endured for no better reasons than that something might be produced that served only man's body and not his spirit, and that fat men might make money and get fatter still.

He once began an address in an industrial district with the following melancholy remark:—

“ I never went over a more interesting twenty miles than those between Rochdale and Burnley. Naturally, the valley has been one of the most beautiful in the Lancashire hills ; one of the far-away solitudes, full of old shepherd ways of life. At this time there

are not—I speak deliberately and, I believe, quite literally—there are not, I think, more than a thousand yards of road to be traversed anywhere without passing a furnace or mill. Now, is that the kind of thing you want to come everywhere ? ”

He regarded Darwin and all his works as he regarded an anatomist who spies and peeps into a corpse to learn the mechanics of the body’s motion, and who ignores or cares nothing for the grace and majesty of the living athlete, and he thought it more worthy of a being “with such large discourse, looking before and after” to seek for God’s handiwork in the glory of the great world and in the light of setting suns, than in the excrement of earth-worms.

He thought that a life spent in accumulating dull facts merely for the purpose of postulating hypotheses which could do nothing towards making men more noble or their aspirations more worthy, was a life directed to leading man away from everything that could aggravate his imagination and refine his taste.

He was wont to cite Darwin’s own published

confession that as a youth Shakespeare and the poets gave him delight. "But now, for many years, I cannot enjoy a line of poetry. I have also almost lost my taste for pictures or music." And also this other confession:—

"It may be truly said that I am like a man who has become colour-blind."

Ruskin thought it deplorable that an able man should give up all interest in the poets and lose all sense of colour, and all feeling for beauty in literature and art, and the world around him, for such things as the supposed descent of himself and others from an infinitely remote arboreal ape, and for the life and times of earth worms and what they excrete.

When I first knew Ruskin, in 1884, I was devoting some of my time and interest to painting, and, encouraged by his complacent toleration of my well-meant struggles, I sent him some studies of clouds, saying I was doing my best to understand them. He immediately wrote to me:—

"Fix your mind wholly on skies, and give up everything for them, at present ; no study will reward

you more, nor is any in so completely elementary a state ; give your young energy to it ; and you will soon have wonderful things to tell and show the world."

Alas, I have told and shown the world nothing with my brush ! The imperative calls of a strenuous life gradually took the brush from my hand and put a pen in it, which needed no studio, and could be plied anywhere and at almost any time.

Ruskin enjoyed the quite inestimable advantage of a private fortune, which left him free from the hateful bondage of some repellant daily drudgery to earn his living, and I think he sometimes forgot that we are not all so infinitely blessed as was he !

No doubt, some who are born with adequate fortunes, and who have no need to earn their daily bread, their rent, and their clothes, and all other necessities, do not devote their leisure and freedom to anything better than the pursuit of pleasure and the neglect of any small duties that attach to their positions. But many and

many a man has been forced to turn aside from the pleasant fields of art, letters, and self cultivation, and from sheer necessity has been forced to step down from that ladder up which his soul longed to climb, whose top is lost in glory.

Ruskin was free to climb that ladder, and delivered to us the account of the wonders and splendours he reached in language that can never die.

When last I travelled northward to Scotland by road I delayed my journey in the lake country, that region so hallowed to one of my name, and it was my privilege to secure as a companion for a day Sir William Watson, who dwells in honoured seclusion in that sacred land, and together we made our pilgrimage, first to Wordsworth's grave, beside which he wrote his poem which has gone round the world as one of England's elegiac masterpieces, and then over the hills to Coniston churchyard, where lies the mortal part of Ruskin. Coniston mountain towers above the little grave-yard on one side and the

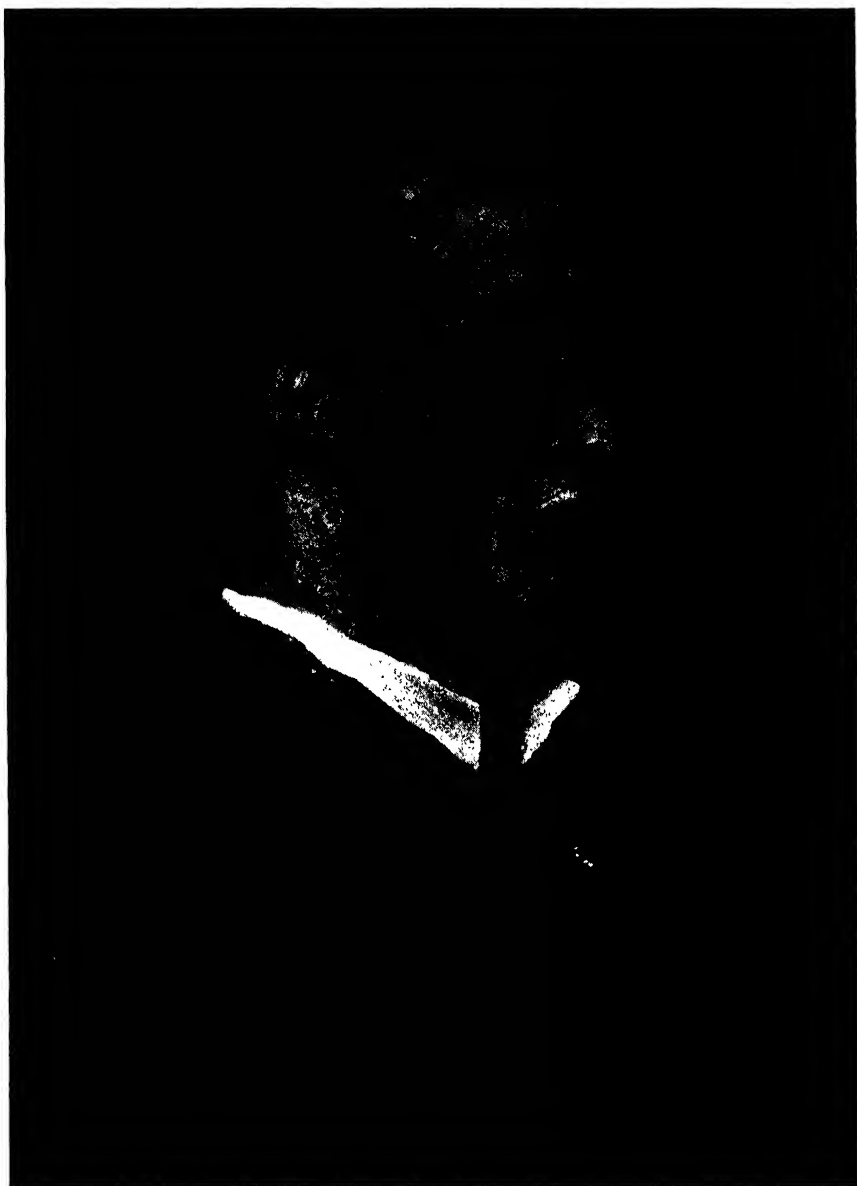
lovely lake stretches away on the other, and there in perfect peace reposes the last of the immortal choir that have consecrated that lovely corner of England.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

IT not seldom happens that when we meet people who are famous in the world of letters—poets, historians, essayists, and writers of novels—we experience a sense of disappointment. Sometimes, as in the case of one much-discussed novelist of the Victorian times, whose style presented obscurities too profound for elucidation by ordinary readers, his living presence conveyed a conviction that he was not a simple and natural person, but was taking trouble to impress his audience with his subtlety of mind and profundity of expression, and in the result no real pleasure was derived from the encounter.

Others seem to preserve all their brightness of mind for their study, and are reluctant to place before two or three what they desire to preserve for the larger public.

Others condescend, and think to put their acquaintances at their ease by discussing the



MATTHEW ARNOLD
BY G. F. WATTS, R.A.

weather in words of one or at most two syllables, and by remarking that the sky is blue, that the grass is green, and that the rain is wet. These form, perhaps, the most exasperating class, for no one enjoys being talked down to, not even the most stupid of us.

Matthew Arnold, who in some ways was the most distinguished man of letters of his time, was a person who never disappointed anyone who had the happiness to meet him. He was the most delightful companion for a walk to be found in the wide world. To a whimsical wit he combined the wide learning of the scholar, the perfect taste of the cultivated gentleman, and the kindly heart of a child. He perfectly filled his appointed place in the great reign of Victoria. The long period of uninterrupted peace had been filled with the solid triumphs of material prosperity. England had been covered with railways, factories, coal pits, and vast commercial enterprises; wealth had accumulated in huge aggregations never

before known in England, and Sir Gorgeous Midas from the Midlands was the admired type of British citizen.

Matthew Arnold, representing culture and scholarship that was like to be borne down by the universal worship of wealth, gaily pierced the heavy Philistines with his brilliant rapier, and claimed that the world was still for the witty and the wise, and could never permanently belong to the stupid rich. In continual charmingly written articles he preached his doctrine of sweetness and light in a society led away captive at the chariot wheels of wealth. Gold was being heaped on gold in bewildering profusion, and the imperishable claim of culture and scholarship and taste needed such a man as Arnold to make itself audible in the din of accumulating cash.

He had none of the wrath of Carlyle, nor did he possess the visions of splendour of Ruskin. His attitude was entirely philosophic; grievous wrongs did not move him to indigna-

tion; splendid achievements did not rouse him to true enthusiasm. Passion did not affect him; calamity left him untouched; he was always serene and urbane. He declined controversy of a close and earnest character, no argumentative assault disturbed his equanimity; to a fierce adversary he was bland, to his friends he was sweet and playful and affectionate.

In all literary matters his criticism was penetrating and incisive; he was saturated with the classics, and consequently his standards were high and severe. I had the great advantage of receiving a long letter from him of measured criticism of the first book I ever published, every word of which I have treasured and obeyed for the rest of my life. In my youthful enthusiasm I had written some of the book in blank verse, and printed it, of course, as prose. He condemned this in the following terms:—

“This I think injures the effect of the book. The verse is good and the prose narrative is quite well written, so either the one or the

other treatment would probably have in your hands been satisfactory, but the mixture of both treatments is not. I remember how the feats of Dickens in the way of long pieces of disguised blank verse used to put me out in some of his works." In the same letter he tells me that "the public abhors plays for the closet," and dissuades me from that kind of work. This letter is dated November 3rd, 1887, and there is much else of kindly advice and encouragement in it which was and has been ever precious to me.

At that time there was some risk of my relying on my pen to support me in life, and one day, when I was visiting Matthew Arnold at his home at Pains Hill Cottage at Cobham, I discussed the matter with him with a view to receiving some good advice, and found that he was averse from anyone relying on writing of any sort for a living, unless the writer could command a ready public, either as a professional journalist or as a popular novelist.

He did not rate novels as a high form of literature, and quoted a saying of Coleridge that "novel reading spares the reader the trouble of thinking, it saves him from the boredom of vacancy, and establishes a habit of indolence," but he admitted that it was the best paid of all forms of letters. In fact he told me that he himself had been offered £10,000 if he would write a novel, but had refused to do it. He also said that though he was, he supposed, pretty well known as a writer, yet never in his life had he made over £500 in any one year from his pen. His advice was to look to one of the recognised professions for a livelihood, and only expect from literary work what he designated as a "fringe." How many lives of literary men would have been spared an unending struggle with poverty if they had early received and followed this advice. Matthew Arnold himself accepted with complacency the profession of Inspector of Schools, which relieved him from financial anxiety, and left him free to write without any compulsion, and obtain thereby his "fringe."

Of course I gratefully followed the excellent advice he gave me. Though he did not achieve opulence with his pen, he did with it something far more splendid, for he was the great force in the England of that time to suppress the vulgar and elevate the refined. He was a delightful talker, assuming a playful Olympian manner which fools mistook for vanity, but which to all others was an added touch of diversion to his wit. He always seemed to be benignly happy in himself, and there was no outward sign of the settled melancholy and wistful sadness that runs through all his poetry. "The Scholar Gipsy" and "Thyrsis" seems to me among the most hauntingly beautiful poems of the age. Few more lovely tributes of a friend to his friend have been written than these of Matthew Arnold to Clough. When he departed from the world suddenly with no premonition, he left a vacant space which no one since has been able quite adequately to fill. He was laid to rest in Laleham Churchyard on the banks of the Thames, and was

followed to the grave by a concourse of men of letters that no other event could have brought together, who came there to show their affection for, and to do honour to, a gracious, benign gentleman and scholar who did much to refine and sweeten the world.

ROBERT BROWNING.

ROBERT BROWNING was a man whose person gave no suggestion of his writings. He had not in his countenance the lineaments of genius that one looked for.

No one could help respecting him as a man and a writer. He was no destructive force in literature, but rather a powerful builder up of all that was good and true and manly.

His works may be searched in vain for anything appealing to the lower motives or tendencies of mankind. An uplifting, helpful, clean, strong influence was his in every line he wrote. He bid us all look up and never lose hope—

“My own hope is a sun will pierce
The thickest cloud earth ever stretched.”

In the Inn album he tells us that he regards it better to have failed in the high aim than vulgarly to succeed in the low aim,

and in his occasional and too few lyrics he showed that if he so chose he could give us loveliness and harmony and all that the heart of man can ask from the poet; but in his great voluminous works he elected to deliver to us what he had to say in the mere habiliments of poetry; that is, he faithfully observed the technical rules of prosody and the customary laws of rhyme, but as a rule that was his only concession to the distinction between prose and poetry.

To the tradition which has come all the way down, from Homer to Tennyson, that poetry should charm as well as inform, and that it should fall musically upon the ear and possess a loveliness that appeals to the heart he gave no adherence, and, indeed, he continually and with lifelong persistence wrote lines that were of set purpose ugly to the ear and grotesque to the understanding, and not seldom what he wrote was obscure to the general reader.

It may be that in adopting the grotesque

style he was imitating Byron's later work. But in Byron's case the grotesque performances in "Don Juan" may be regarded as not unfitly expressing the turbulent surgings of an exasperated soul, rebelling against the world it had defied.

In Browning's hands it could express nothing of the kind, for no such riot was welling up in his heart. He led a perfectly correct life, at one with Society, in which he moved with becoming decorum.

The reason, therefore, for his assuming ugliness of sound and grotesqueness of manner must be sought for elsewhere. Perhaps it may be surmised that, with Tennyson pouring forth his exquisite melodious verse as his contemporary, he felt the impossibility of any challenge in the ancient orthodox fields of harmonious verse so powerfully occupied by another, and turned to something that should afford no field for comparison.

If this be so, no finer tribute was ever paid by one writer to another.

But perhaps in the result a disservice was unwittingly done to the craft of the poet, for it can hardly be doubted that since Browning's defection from loveliness as a quality of poetry and his adoption of the grotesque the world has witnessed the wildest disregard of the venerable traditions sanctified by a thousand singers of all nations and races, and sentences that obey no laws of prosody or rhyme have been printed in books with "Poetry" inscribed on their covers.

As well might Ruskin's "Sesame and Lilies" be issued to the world and designated a poem. And so we come round to the position that if beautiful, harmonious prose fulfils all the requirements of poetry, then prosody and rhyme are not necessary concomitants of it, and do not constitute poetry, and Browning's work having only those unnecessary qualities and being without loveliness or harmony, it is, therefore, not poetry, but ugly inharmonious prose.

By-and-by no doubt everyone will come back to the abiding principle, that law and order are the first necessities of any art or craft, and that the spirit of anarchy and bolshevism inevitably leads men downwards, and not upwards, in all forms of human endeavour and performance.

Browning himself was a little disappointing as a conversationalist. It not seldom happens that a great writer fails to be as impressive in Society as he is in his works, and that a man whose talk is one coruscation of brilliant sallies of wit and wisdom never writes a line.

I have known clever women who have complained that Browning would deliberately talk down to them, and turn the talk on to hats and fichus. He frequently dined at my father's house, and I often met him out in other houses, but I do not recall his ever talking in a striking or illuminating manner.

He may have had a fine countenance, but it was entirely concealed by hair—only his eyes and nose being visible.

Mrs. Browning, of course, I never saw or knew personally, for she died when I was a child; her own beautiful verse was never in the least affected by that of her husband.

Her "Lady Geraldine's Courtship" has always seemed to me one of the most beautiful love-poems ever penned by a woman, and it possesses an added charm in its vivid picture of English fine Society in the early years of the nineteenth century.

Her "Cry of the Children" certainly did a great service in the cause of humaneness, and made the world ashamed of its treatment of little children in the mills and factories of the country.

Seldom, if ever, in the history of literature have a poet and poetess married, the work of both of whom has reached a permanent eminence in the world.

Christina Rossetti alone rivals Mrs. Browning among the poetesses of the Victorian times.

And, after all, these two stand out in conspicuous distinction as the greatest women poets that have appeared in the world since Sappho, and confer a glory upon the Victorian age.

Not excepting even Keble, Christina Rossetti seems to me to have been the greatest writer of religious verse in recent years, although it so often displays a lack of finish that is to be regretted.

Much of Browning's work is undoubtedly too obscure to afford enjoyment to the reader. Societies were even formed to elucidate the difficulties. Many persons not lacking in intelligence were unable to understand some of his passages. My father, who was not without the capacity for clear thought, was unable to discover the meaning of some of his lines. A diverting encounter between him and the poet occurred on the steps of the Athenæum. Browning inquired if my father had read his last volume, and my father replied that he had read it and understood about a third of it, to

which Browning rejoined: "That's very well for one of your understanding," which afforded my father great amusement.

I may be old-fashioned, but I cannot accept as poetry this kind of writing:

Tongue I wag, pen I ply, who am Abbott.
Stick thou son to paint-brush and dab-pot !
But soft ! I scratch hard on the scab hot.
Though cured of thy plague there may linger
A pimple I fray with rough finger,
et cetera !

Browning was the first poet of the nineteenth century to descend to sheer beastliness and brutality, which is utterly to degrade the true function of poetry. But in his better moods he was wholesome and fine :

"God's in His Heaven, all's right with the world."

CARDINAL NEWMAN.

THE interest taken in Cardinal Newman's work and life has suffered from the fact that only a languid attention is now paid to the contests and jousts in which he was in his earlier time so prominent a figure, and that a life of perfect sanctity has now but little influence upon mankind.

The world is no longer shaken to its foundations by the furious assaults and repulses in the battle over the Oxford movement. It has passed permanently away to other fields of thought and of dispute, and to us, now far removed from it all, the literature of those onslaughts seems no more than what Sir William Watson has finely called "the dust of vanished collisions." But in its time and place his "*Apologia pro vita sua*" was a wonderful effort of controversy and a splendid piece of invective.

Hardly in all the history of literary tournaments has anyone been so completely demolished as was Charles Kingsley in that book.



CARDINAL NEWMAN

FROM THE PORTRAIT BY JANE FORTESCUE LADY COLERIDGE.

Newman suavely inquired of the Anglican parson whether his belief in the Trinity in Unity was not part of his creed, and then, remarking "I know my abstract idea of three is simply incompatible with my idea of one," demands an explanation from Kingsley why he, Newman, should be attacked for believing what is no more difficult to reconcile with the reason than the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity.

When Kingsley is finally silenced the cardinal exclaims: "Away with you, Mr. Kingsley, and fly into space." But this parting shot is only to be found in the first edition; when the beating pulse of battle had subsided, and the quiet of the recluse and scholar had re-claimed his heart, the fierce exclamatory passages were allowed to disappear from all subsequent editions.

When it was my privilege to know this wonderful man he had long left all his combats behind him and had piloted the vessel of his soul to the desired port in safety.

He would visit only two houses in London—

my father's and the Duke of Norfolk's. He would write some time beforehand and ask if a visit would be convenient at such a time, and, of course, he was welcomed with a cordiality sweetened by reverence. His visits were kept a secret, as no sooner was it known that he was in the house than countless people sought access to him, and he would quickly return to Birmingham.

I have an entry in my diary on May 29th, 1883, recording his last visit to 1, Sussex-square. On that day he expressed a wish to take my little son, then four years old, to the Zoological Gardens, and together they went, and the Cardinal let the little boy pull him by the hand from cage to cage, all unconscious of the greatness of his companion. This was in the morning; in the afternoon he went away, leaning on my arm, down the steps from the door, and when his little friend kissed his hand to him he lifted his own hand in response to bless him as he drove away.

I never saw him again.

Most of the portraits of Newman, of which there are several, fail to give the strange ethereal aspect of the man. The best of them is, I believe, acknowledged to be that done by my mother. I watched it from its first beginning to its last stroke, and it certainly approaches more nearly to his wistful, weary, but blessed expression than does any other. The face in that portrait is of one to whom the world and its turmoils has long ceased to be of any moment, who has found peace in the only possible haven for his soul, but who waited for the end with only diffident and trembling hope.

I have seen and known many remarkable men in my lifetime, but never one who was so manifestly and indubitably one of the blessed of God. I do not think such men are to be found to-day. When he came into a room full of people, although he was compassed about by the humility of the saints, there seemed immediately to be no one else present of any account. He had a presence that was a benediction. Like all the great men of his day, he was

pre-eminently a gentleman and a scholar, and when among friends he not seldom displayed a gentle and playful humour.

He met Matthew Arnold, at his own desire, for the first time in my father's house and manifestly enjoyed the encounter, each with exquisite delicacy bantered the other, though Matthew Arnold always as an old pupil might with a revered master.

Nearly half a century has slipped away and the world has lost something of its distinction that will be difficult to revive. These men of the great Victorian Age cared nothing for things material; the spiritual things of life absorbed them wholly. They loved beauty more than knowledge. Indeed, I have heard the Cardinal say that it did not seem to him to be a matter of any moment in human affairs whether the earth went round the sun or the sun went round the earth, "and so," he added quizzically, "if, as some philosophers kindly inform us, nothing really exists except thought, we can think

whatever we like about the earth and the sun's motions and none of us be the worse."

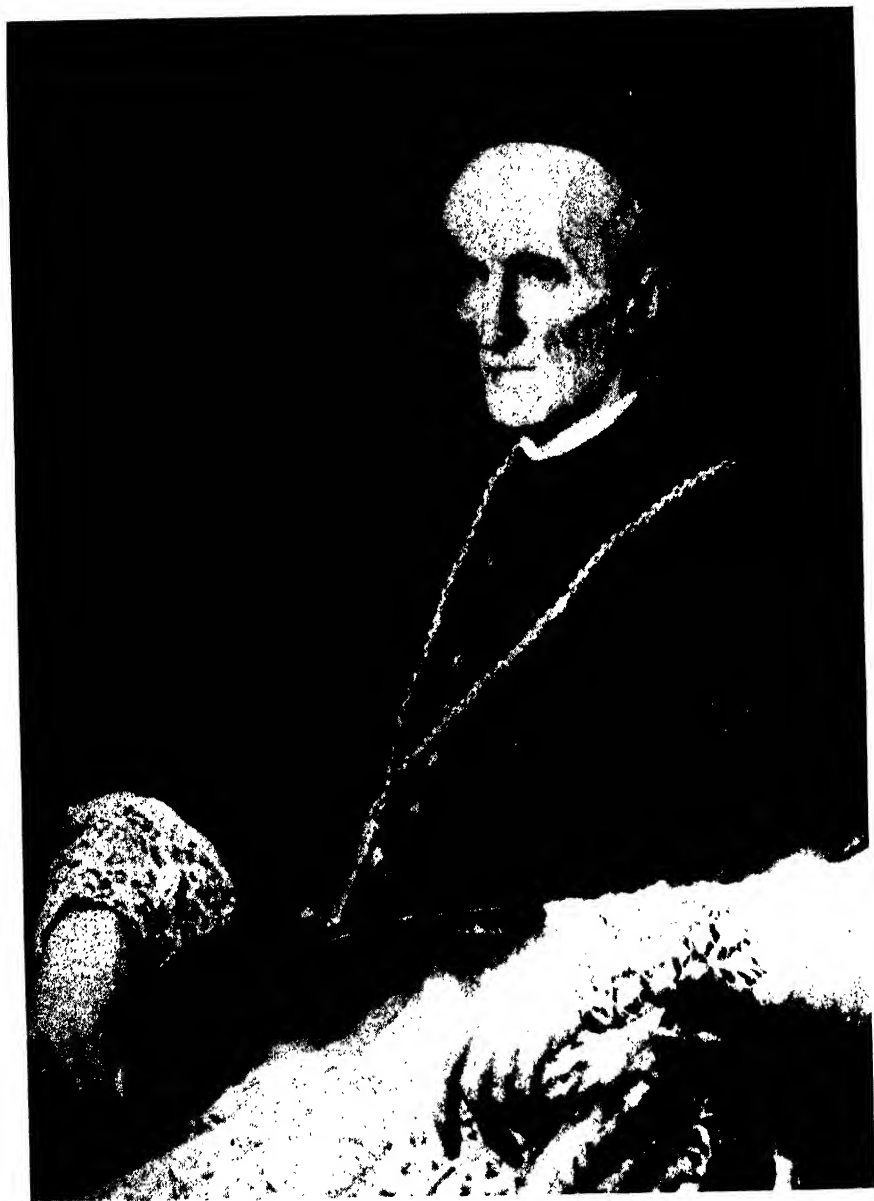
Science left on these men no mark or influence; they perceived that it had no relation to conduct and could never inculcate nobility, magnanimity, or any of the fine qualities of man's heart, and they went their way in serene indifference to it, with their eyes fixed on what alone can make life beautiful and noble.

The Cardinal's powers as a poet have been rather overlooked in his greatness in other fields of letters. It is a remarkable fact that General Gordon treasured a copy of the "Dream of Gerontius" when he was alone waiting for succour that never came to him at Khartum, which copy reached England at last and was found to be full of Gordon's markings of passages he loved.

The occasion when Newman wrote "Lead, Kindly Light" he describes himself in his *Apologia*: having waited for a passage from Palermo for some time he writes: "At last I got off in an

orange boat bound for Marseilles. We were becalmed a whole week in the Straits of Bonifacio. Then it was that I wrote the lines 'Lead, Kindly Light' which have since become well known." I have myself been in those Straits at night and have seen the beam from the lighthouse that inspired that lovely poem.

An Anglican bishop had the impertinence to add a verse of his own to it in a hymnal he published ; and he did this in the lifetime of the Cardinal, who only smiled at the impudence and made no remonstrance. Many of his most splendid outpourings of eloquence and perfect passages of measured stately prose lie buried deep in a long series of volumes of sermons, and, in these days of shallow scrambling reading, there they are likely to remain in solemn sepulture.



CARDINAL MANNING
FROM THE PORTRAIT BY G. F. WATTS, R.A.

CARDINAL MANNING.

CARDINAL MANNING in his time and sphere of action filled the space in human affairs that his brother, Cardinal Newman, left altogether vacant.

Newman, when I had the felicity to be in the same house with him, and to know him with the intimacy such contiguity confers, had long retired from the turbulent arena of ecclesiastical collisions, had laid aside all weapons of controversy, averted his sad eyes away from all the tumult of public affairs, and with his aspect turned wholly towards another world had laid his heart to rest.

Manning to the end of his life was a fighter in the van for all he thought right, ready to bring the great office he held to the support of what he was sure was God's work in the world. A powerful statesman for his Church, with a fearless, indomitable will, caring less than nothing for principalities and powers, indifferent

whether his espousal of causes were popular or not, a crosier, indeed, in one hand, but a battle axe in the other.

Nothing was omitted to impress mankind with the personal austerity with which he adorned his puissant power. His archbishop's house at the bottom of Carlisle-place gave to the visitor a sense of the frigid severity of his surroundings. The large stone stair-case without any carpet, gelid as chastity itself, led up to a wide room with nothing of comfort about it; tall backed chairs without cushioned seats and a large table were all the furniture to be found in it.

Into this claustral apartment the Cardinal would then advance from some inner room, and his appearance was entirely consonant with his surroundings. Tall and thin, almost to emaciation, with a countenance that once seen could never be forgotten, and a courtesy serene and gracious, he was ready at once to receive confidence and confer advice on whatever matter the visitor laid before him.

On occasion he would suddenly emerge into the public arena of some controversy, determined, fearless, dominating, and act with swift precision. Once, when others had quite failed to achieve any elucidation of a dispute at the London docks, he drove down in his little brougham, appeared upon the scene with startling unexpected assumption of authority, and, unassisted by anyone, by the sole influence of his commanding personality, he settled the dispute and stopped the strike. The Cardinal in his surroundings, in his personal life, and in his public acts, was a challenging figure to the rotund episcopal dignitaries of the English Church, with their wives and families, and worldly comforts about them.

He gave the impression of being a consciously great ecclesiastic whose splendour derived altogether from his total lack of this world's amenities. He was a man of manifestly noble life and lofty purpose, setting an example, that all must respect, to the faithful in his own community; a prince of the Roman Church fulfilling his august

function faultlessly in full view of a critical world.

He never adopted the balancing, "facing-both-ways" attitude so dear to successive occupants of Lambeth Palace. He made his decision on any great question and avowed it at once with fearless precision. In 1882 he appeared at a meeting in Lord Shaftesbury's house in Grosvenor-square to give an authoritative pronouncement on the burning question of vivisection, and these were his words:

"I know that an impression has been made that those whom I represent look, if not with approbation, at least with great indulgence, on the question of vivisection.

"I grieve to say that abroad there are a great many (whom I beg leave to say I do not represent) who do favour the practice; but this I do protest, that there is not a religious instinct in nature, nor a religion of nature, nor is there a word in revelation, either in the Old Testament or the New Testament, nor is there to be found in the great theology which I do represent, no,

nor in any act of the Church of which I am a member ; no, nor in the lives and utterances of any one of those great servants of that Church who stand as examples, nor is there any authoritative utterance anywhere to be found in favour of vivisection.”

This deliverance, be it remembered, was pronounced in the house of Lord Shaftesbury, who was the acknowledged head of the evangelical party in England, and even the Cardinal's presence in such surroundings was evidence of his wide-minded freedom from small prejudices ; and his downright association with one of the most unpopular movements of the day was characteristic of his courage and entire indifference to all considerations other than those which ruled his conscience.

I once asked him to come to my support in a disputed matter as to policy in the Anti-Vivisection Society. He did so at once, with great force and success. His sense of humour was manifest in a note he subsequently sent

me, in which, referring to the meeting, he remarked: "I thought we were nearly vivisectioning each other that last time we met."

On another occasion I went to ask him, at the instance of my uncle, then Bishop of Oxford, to vote against a proposal before the Senate at Oxford, and he told me he was no longer a member of the University. "Hope and I," he added whimsically, "were excommunicated, you know, a long time ago together."

The Cardinal has been subjected to very severe criticism by one who must have known him personally, and by one who certainly did not. The latter has described him as a person always ready to deceive himself where his own advancement was in question, with hypocritical self-suggestions of good motives.

"He was not a man," says this young critic who never saw him, "who was likely to forget to look before he leaped, nor one who, if he happened to know that there was a mattress spread to receive him, would leap

with less conviction.” And, then, it being an indisputable fact that Manning, when an Arch-deacon in the Church of England, had had an audience of the Pope, of which no record exists, this writer invents a discourse for the Pope, making him say: “Ah! dear Signor Manning, why don’t you come over to us? Do you suppose that we should not look after you?” This seems to me a cruel assault on a dead man. It is a fact that Manning refused the Papacy, and when he died he did not possess a hundred pounds in the world. These are better evidences of his unworldliness than are the inventions of malice evidence of his worldliness.

This kind of obituary assassination of a man’s reputation, when he is dead and can no longer defend himself, perhaps explains why Matthew Arnold left behind him explicit instructions that no one was to write his life.

But nothing can protect a man from posthumous dissection at the hands of young literary Apaches ; and, unfortunately, kindness has no chance against malice with the lending libraries.

LORD COLERIDGE.

THERE had been brilliant Coleridges born in the eighteenth century, and one of them was world famous; and my father, therefore, had had to bear upon his shoulders what Bishop Wilberforce of Oxford called “the perilous inheritance” of a great name when he came from Eton and Balliol, and embarked upon his career in London. His father, a ripe and splendid scholar, had added something to the burden and challenge of the name as an honoured judge and saintly character.

The peculiar gift that carried the son rapidly through all the steps of his profession to the Chief Justiceship of England was that of speech. The perfectly modulated, and yet far-reaching, voice was conjoined with a scholar’s choice of language and a convincing art of persuasion.

In all public speaking it is of more importance in producing an effect upon the audience how a man says a thing than what he says.



LORD COLERIDGE, Chief Justice.

FROM THE PORTRAIT BY JANE FORTESCUE LADY COLERIDGE.

Oratory that enthralls a concourse of people who sit under its spell too often perishes utterly save in the doubtful memory of those who heard it. If reported at all in any public paper it is probably cut about, mauled, and distorted; the beauty of the balanced sentence, the felicitous cadence of the vowel sounds, and all the refinements that together fascinate the hearer find no reproduction in the journalistic version that next day appears.

Speeches delivered in the House of Commons have a better fate. In "Hansard" they are produced with faithful accuracy by skilled men in the Reporters' Gallery, and great flights of eloquence can be searched for and brought to light in after years for the world's delight. But many a splendid deliverance in defence of innocence or in condemnation of wickedness that have entranced all in a court of justice are lost for ever to posterity, and live only in the visionary memory of those that heard them.

To be a great advocate in the courts of law

a man must have the command of many emotions and of their convincing expression. He must be able to rouse in his being the emotions of biting scorn, fierce indignation, felicitous ridicule, and touching pathos. He must be able to feel the deepest sorrow at undeserved wrong, and the loftiest exultation at the triumph of justice and right. He must display valour when all seems lost; he must have a sense of honour that feels a stain like a wound, and be clothed with courtesy that no unbecoming assault can disturb. Thus armed and panoplied the advocate can do wonders and leave all compeers behind him.

The poet before him had a certain gift of inspired talk that none of his generation rivalled, and something of this gift was seen again in the Chief Justice, and the power of the skilled actor was to this conjoined.

The appropriate emotion pertaining to the part to be played as advocate came with ease to him, and, espousing with art that was not visible the cause he represented, he appeared to suffer

with his client whatever were the emotions proper to his situation and circumstances. These were the faculties and powers which made his upward path to the highest position inevitable and foreordained.

When once established as a judge, the passionate advocate disappeared, and the serene arbiter of justice succeeded. He maintained with exact attention all the ancient forms and ceremonies of the office, and his courtesy led him always when on circuit to assume his judge's robes in the train before reaching each circuit town, because he felt that if the high sheriff did him the honour to meet him at the railway station in court dress and a sword it would ill become him to step from the train less ceremoniously attired.

I have since lived to see a judge enter his circuit town on a push bicycle, with a flannel shirt and collar on his body and what is colloquially known as a billycock hat on his head. No doubt he had written beforehand excusing the

high sheriff from meeting him anywhere or at all. But something is perhaps due to the dignity of a judgeship which suffers a dejection from such a performance.

The conduct of the chief justiceship and the observance of the functions that appertain to that office were fulfilled by Lord Coleridge with care, and with a desire to sustain and enforce the dignity of that great office in a manner worthy of it. He always desired to enhance the greatness of the Bar as a profession, and set an example on the bench of impregnable courtesy to all, old or young, who appeared before him.

But at home and away from the Law Courts it was plain to everyone that his being a judge was only one of his accomplishments. He throughout his life pursued the profession more as a necessity than a pleasure, and was always happy in leaving it for other fields of occupation and enjoyment. His house was constantly the meeting-place of all the pleasant people engaged in literature, music, or politics. In his time,

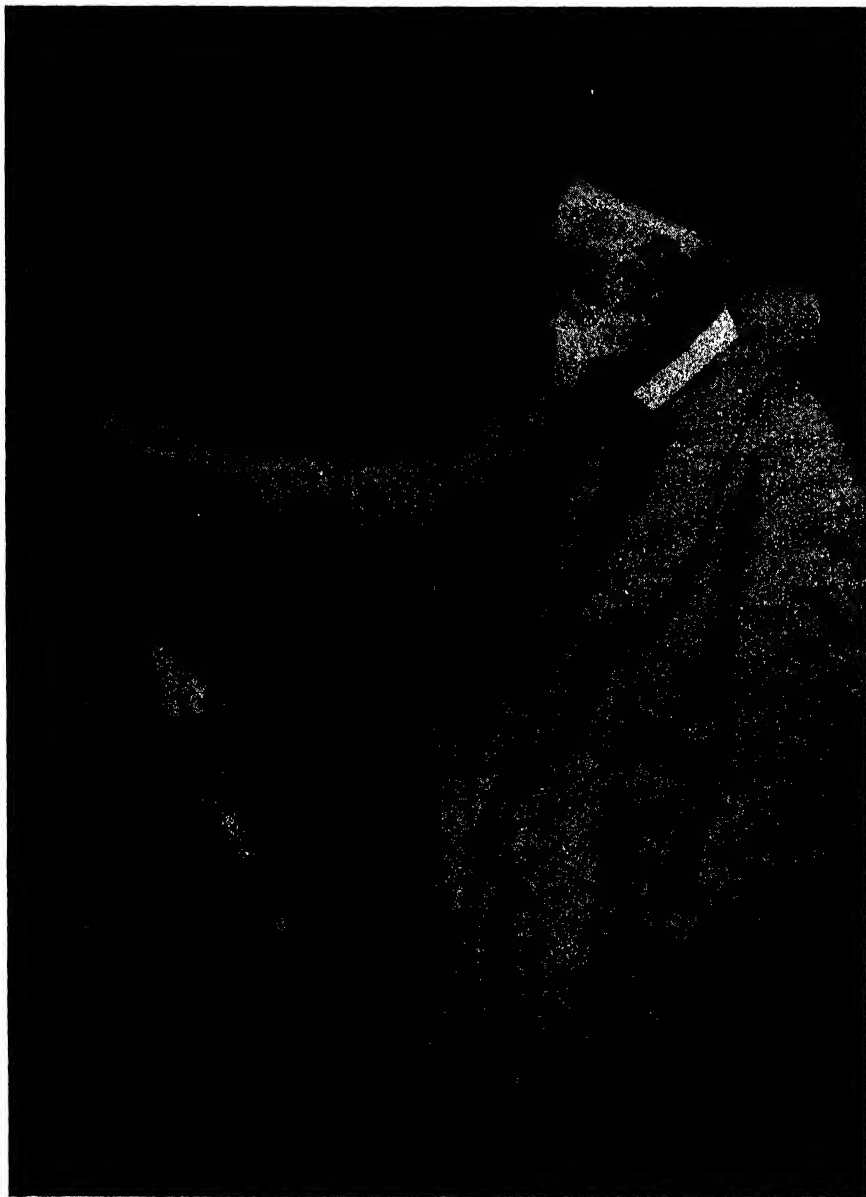
before the motor-car had changed the habits of society and had destroyed the ancient repose of life, people stayed in their London homes for months together; no one rushed away on Friday night or Saturday morning to find diversion in a Sunday in the country.

Dinner parties were really the chief pleasure of London dwellers, and the Chief Justice's hospitalities in this direction were exceptionally interesting to those who participated in them. For many years it was my business as his private secretary to assist in arranging these pleasant gatherings, to which people were invited who were sure to be most congenial to one another.

All manner of persons distinguished in their several fields of effort were thus brought into friendly converse. But one limitation the Chief Justice inexorably enforced. He did not include in his hospitality anyone who might be classed as Bohemian. He had an inveterate distaste for anything down at heel.

This exclusive preference for persons who

habitually observed all the recognised refinements of life and habit as practised by himself and his intimate friends was quite characteristic of the Victorian times in which he lived. All these prejudices, if they ought so to be styled, are now very much abated. The world has moved away from them, but in their time and place they lent something to life in London which, I suppose, will never return.



G. F. WATTS, R.A.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ERNEST H. MILLS.

G. F. WATTS.

FOR many years I had the inestimable privilege of enjoying a close friendship with G. F. Watts.

He was, of course, many years my senior, but throughout my life it has been my happiness to be on intimate relations with many people older than myself, from whom I have endeavoured to learn what I could to my advantage.

I was never one of the bright, modern band who extol the present at the expense of the past and who regard those older than themselves as grey-beard pantaloons. I always had a respect for ripe experience, matured judgment, and storied learning.

Any man born with manual dexterity can with care and industry acquire the technique necessary for the craft of an artist, but unless he has a great deal more than that, his productions never rise beyond manifestations of skilled labour.

Watts brought to his easel much more than dexterity of hand ; he, indeed, cared very little for that professional quality in an artist.

“The professional element,” he wrote to me in 1891, “both in art and music is the one I care least about. I say the least, I might rather say it seems to me to be often destructive of finer qualities. The artist is very generally one who has taken up the profession because it is a good one from a small and commercial point of view, while the amateur cares for the thing itself. There is this difference from the work of the one and the other. The professional artist, even if he has less ability, learns to complete ; such completion may be mechanical and really good for nothing, but it looks like finish, and is in its way finish. The amateur mainly suggests, and for the reason given above such suggestion is really a better thing than the laboured completion, but the want of this latter quality takes the seriousness out of the work. Completion does not mean smoothness or elaboration. The most rapid work of Velasquez or Tintoretto will

be a far more finished production than an elaborated painting by an inferior artist, but in the one case however rough and even coarse the strokes may be every one will mean something, will be in the right place, and will have a distinct edge, this last is perhaps the great test, as certainty of touch will prove the workman's correctness of eye and cultivation of hand; not only must every form be a real form, but, what is often overlooked, the shadows must be no less true in shape and depth. When I return to town I shall be most happy to be of use to you if I can be.

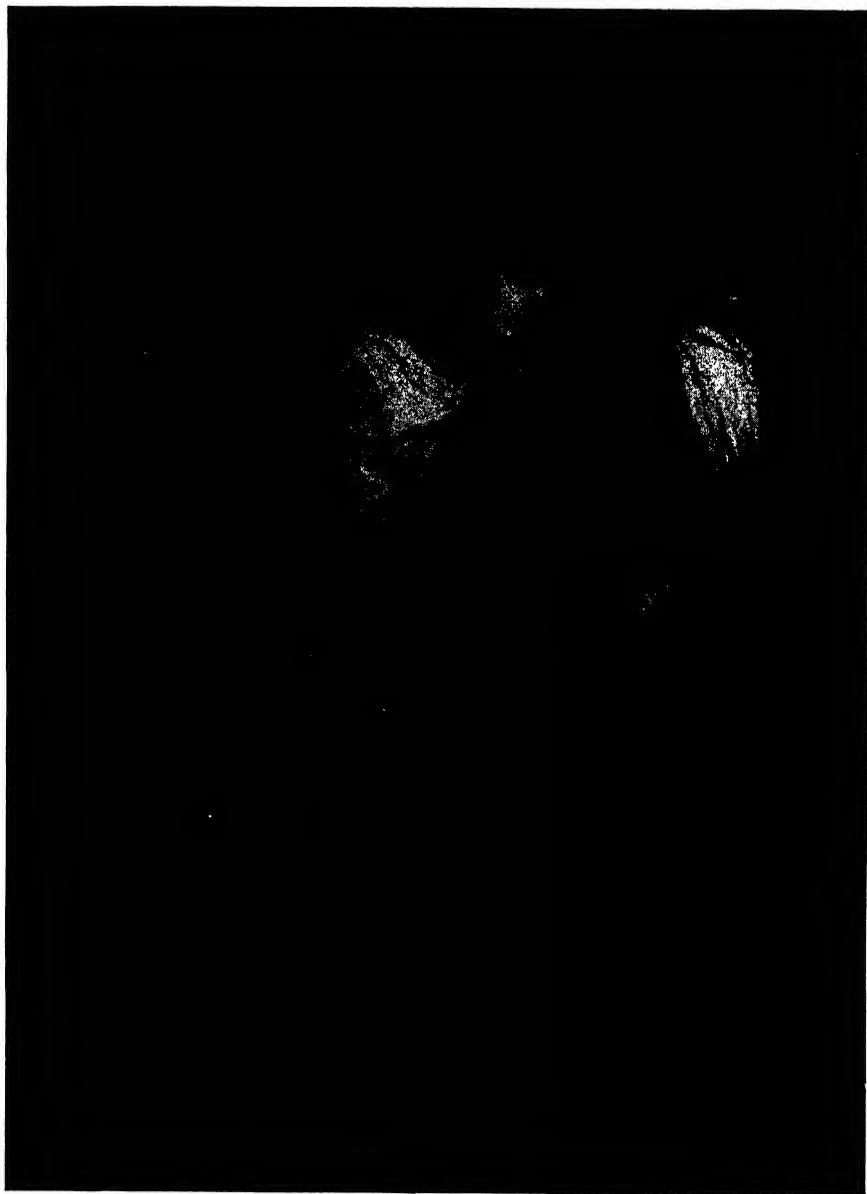
“Just as I was writing this, your letter came to hand. Thanks for the photograph, which is admirable, and which has the completion I was writing of.”

As all the world knows, Watts only sold a picture now and then to procure just what was necessary for his very simple needs. His most magnificent works he kept in his studios, and they were still in his possession when he died.

His "Paolo and Francesca" has always seemed to me his highest achievement; the subject might well daunt the greatest of limners—eternal love assuaging eternal torment—but none can dispute the magnificence of Watts' triumph in this glorious canvas. He always refused to sell it, and to-day, were the world admitted to a contest for its possession, no one can estimate what would be the value of it finally decided in such a competition.

I have found from a wide experience that fine painters are generally men of remarkable powers outside their art, and I have heard better talk on all manner of subjects in the studios of famous men than anywhere else. When the light of a short day fails, and the brushes are laid aside, and the generally battered old chairs are drawn up round the stove, matters of the great turbulent world without are often discussed with a genial detachment and luminous criticism seldom found elsewhere.

Watts, though he lived the life of a recluse—



PAOLO AND FRANCESCA
BY G. F. WATTS, R.A.

never in his life, as far as I am aware, ever making a public speech or joining in any public function, and hardly ever being seen dining out of his own house—yet watched with interest all human affairs and to his friends revealed opinions upon them that none failed to respect.

He never set up a canvas without a high and noble intent. His poetic imagination conferred visions upon him which his hand was not always able completely to fulfil, but it is better to reach up towards the impossible than never to reach up at all. In all his work he bore a conscience and desired to direct men's hearts upwards and never downwards.

I have a letter of his in which this is made manifest :

“Thank you for the magazine. I am glad you lift up your voice against the want of appreciation of Tom Hood, a true poet and one of the very few who have turned a great poetical gift to practical teaching ; it is my quarrel with our best that they seldom do so,

but rather wander, I should say soar, among abstractions ; in my smaller way I would endeavour to suggest the deviations from the right in our daily life and the better road by direct appeal to sympathy and sense of justice.

“Of all the poets only Hood and Mrs. Browning have remembered this duty.”

As his great age began to make itself felt his only comment was one of regret that he might not be able to fulfil and finish great enterprises upon which his heart was set.

I was his guest in Surrey on his eightieth birthday and went for a walk across the lovely country round his home which will ever be memorable to me. His alert observance of everything beautiful about us as we walked, and his expressions of loving gratitude for all the glory of the world, left me with a sense of thankfulness that I had long possessed the friendship of such a man.

In his last letter to me he said :

“If I live till the 23rd of next month I

shall enter my 86th year, and cannot have long to know good and evil.”

I may, I suppose, be allowed to quote from one of my own books in conclusion :

“ With serene repose and dignity, this great interpreter of life and seer of visions awaited his translation from the world : and when the summons came he obeyed

‘ Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.’ ”

LORD LEIGHTON, P.R.A.

LORD LEIGHTON, the contemporary and friend of Watts, filled a very distinguished place in the reign of Victoria. As a painter, his work presented a difference from that of Watts as profound as did the work of Tennyson from that of Browning in the field of letters.

Watts pursued his ethereal visions with a hand and brush that sometimes a little failed him as the servants of his soul. Leighton's hand never failed to execute to the last touch the scene of classical story or image of Greek goddess that imagination conjured before his mind's eye. His work was always noble, with the detached impassive beauty of Olympus. As became the President of the Academy, no minutest failure of perfect perspective, or finished technique, or harmony of colour, or dignity of subject, ever crept into his canvas. Ancient mythology was annually adorned by him upon the Gallery walls with pomp and splendour.

I think he firmly believed that it was the duty of an academy to maintain and if possible enforce academic performance upon the painters of England, and to discourage the blobbists, the cubists, the smudgists, and all the other anarchs of the world of art.

He regarded respect for the ancient rules of painting as being as essential as is respect for grammar in letters.

He believed that a picture should be beautiful in subject and in execution, and would have turned with disgust from a canvas with nothing on it but an ugly cane-bottomed chair or a row of carcasses in a butcher's shop, both of which have, in fact been proffered to the public for admiration in famous galleries.

Leighton, besides being an ideal President of the Academy, was an able man of affairs, an eloquent speaker, a man of wide accomplishments, fluent in many languages, handsome, gracious, the embodiment of culture and courtesy; executing his classic pictures in a house and

studio of great splendour, in which he received his friends as a Prince of the Arts.

His very eloquence once led me into making an unfortunately stupid remark. He was discoursing to me before his great canvas of "Andromeda," which he allowed me to see before it was finished, and his fine and discriminating description of all he intended to convey by his brush was so illuminating and splendid that in my enthusiasm for his wonderful power of speech I said that his words, so eloquently describing the picture, greatly added to its beauty, at which he remarked quietly that he had hoped the picture would explain itself.

But he never resented my youthful indiscretion, and to the day of his death he was always serenely kind to me, not seldom coming to dine in the little house in which I then lived in Ovington Gardens.

At his Sunday receptions people distinguished in all forms of achievement were wont

to assemble, and a very charming personal habit of his was then observed :

At six o'clock, however many people were still in his studio, he would mount his dais and say that he hoped no one would depart, but that he always visited his old father on Sundays at that hour, and so with a courteous adieu he disappeared.

He once told me that he made it an inviolable rule of his life always to be in bed by twelve o'clock at night. He said that he found it necessary to make this resolve and adhere to it in order to preserve his powers undiminished.

He had the inestimable advantage of spending much of his youth in Florence, where his father was resident as a physician, and he learnt his art in the schools of that wonderful city, and at Frankfort and Rome.

He died the day after he was raised to the peerage, and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral.

Some time after his death Watts wrote to me, in response to something I sent him, as follows :—

“ What a wonderful tribute ! None but those who knew Leighton as I did can know how true the estimate is ; it was, indeed, a great and glorious individuality. Nature seemed, to such as myself, to be unkindly partial, but perhaps the privilege of knowing so splendid an example should be regarded as enough ; alas for the loss ! ”

This letter is surely as beautiful a tribute to Watts who wrote it as to Leighton of whom he speaks—and Watts’ words were true, for Leighton was, indeed, a fine figure in the splendid world of his day, exquisite in perfect refinement of mind and body, exquisite indeed, in everything.

LORD AVEBURY.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK displayed in his own person a very rare combination, that of a man of science and a man of letters. The pursuit of science generally narrows the mind, restricts the vision, and dulls the heart.

Ruskin once remarked that Newton no doubt discovered why an apple fell to the ground, but neither he nor any other man of science had ever begun to explain the far more mysterious and wonderful problem of how the apple got up there.

Sir John Lubbock being a man of letters had escaped the sterilising effect of the pursuit of science, and was a man who would be more deeply interested in how the apple got up there than in how and by what force it fell to the ground. He also had the very great advantage of being a man of wealth and the head of the ancient firm of Robarts Lubbock and Co. in the City. Rogers, the poet, and Bagehot,

the essayist, shared with Lubbock during the nineteenth century the honour of conferring distinction upon the City by combining their business abilities with a fine taste in letters. He wrote three charming little books, "The Beauties of Nature," "The Pleasures of Life," and "The Use of Life."

In his scientific researches he never lost his sense of beauty or reverence, and a day spent in his company kindled one's interest in many hidden and untrodden fields of knowledge. In November, 1882, I visited him at High Elms, and, having previously read his book about ants and bees, was much interested in the nests of ants which he then kept in his study. There was a stout upright rod supporting the corners of the nests which consisted of flat trays containing the ants' nests, each being covered above and below with sheets of glass covered over with dark cloths except when being inspected, and each tray had a little moat of water round it, across which the ants would never adventure.

Each nest could be swung out on a hinge and examined. He told me that a little time before this particular visit of mine there had been discovered by the governess in the park a nest of a unique breed of ants, which he had with the utmost care transferred to a vacant tray in his study, and had then departed to the City. On his return he found that a little thin stalk of grass had hung over from the nest of the unique ants to that of the nests below, which, unfortunately, was occupied by a very warlike race, and up the little drawbridge they had climbed, traversed with its help the little moat, and after a terrible combat had slaughtered every ant in the new nest. I never heard afterwards whether another nest of the unique ants was discovered.

He was at work when I last visited High Elms upon the shapes of leaves, his object being to discover the causes of their shapes. Starting on the supposition that nothing in such a matter can depend only upon chance, he declared it to be his opinion that the shape of every leaf is

arbitrarily dictated by nature for some certainly adequate reason, the which he was bent on discovering. He said he "had an idea" upon which he was working, and he asked me to help him by taking photographs of leaves of all sorts of trees for him, which he said would be of assistance to him in his work. I did so when I got home, but I have not preserved the correspondence that followed and now have no knowledge of whether he ever solved the problem. I have a record of a visit to Stonehenge in Lubbock's company on July 8th, 1883. In those days, before the advent of the motor-car, the place was absolutely deserted, being a long drive of nine miles from Salisbury. Only persons really interested in the age-old relic were likely to visit it.

It was a rainy day, and the huge stones seemed very impressive under the grey canopy and dreary surroundings. Lubbock declared that all the stones except two or three were from the neighbourhood, but that one came no one knew

whence, certainly not nearer than Cornwall, and that it was doubtful whether it could be matched there; that in Ireland it might be matched, but that whence it came and how it was brought was a mystery. He ventured no definite opinion as to the date of the erection of the stones. We then drove back to Salisbury and together visited the museum there. He discoursed with great knowledge about the Stone Age and the Bronze Age, and said that even the users of the bronze hatchets that we saw there were probably as far behind Stonehenge as Stonehenge is behind us in time. He told me that a bronze axe and the skeleton of an elephant had been found lying together in an excavation made in Gray's Inn Lane. We sat down in the Museum and he discoursed on the antiquity of man, which was a favourite subject with him, and he advanced the theory that the precession of the equinoxes caused a longer period of sun's warmth to be experienced by the northern and southern hemisphere of the earth in alternate cycles of immense time, which caused a greater accumulation of ice, first on one

Polar area and then on the other, which resulted in a slight displacement of the centre of gravity of the earth, the accumulation of ice depressing the pole on which it was more deeply superimposed and causing the oceans to flow towards that pole.

At the present age, he said, a glance at the map would show that the South Pole must have the greater mass of ice upon it, and, indeed, subsequent exploration has entirely confirmed this suggestion, which was then only speculative. When the converse phenomenon occurs and the ice is piled up on the Northern Pole, much of what is now land in the northern hemisphere would, Lubbock said, be submerged, and continents in the southern hemisphere now under water would re-appear. Supposing the hypothesis to be correct, he declared that the aboriginal races of Australia and of Madagascar being similar and of the same origin, indicated that once they were not separated by the immense stretch of ocean now between them, but were

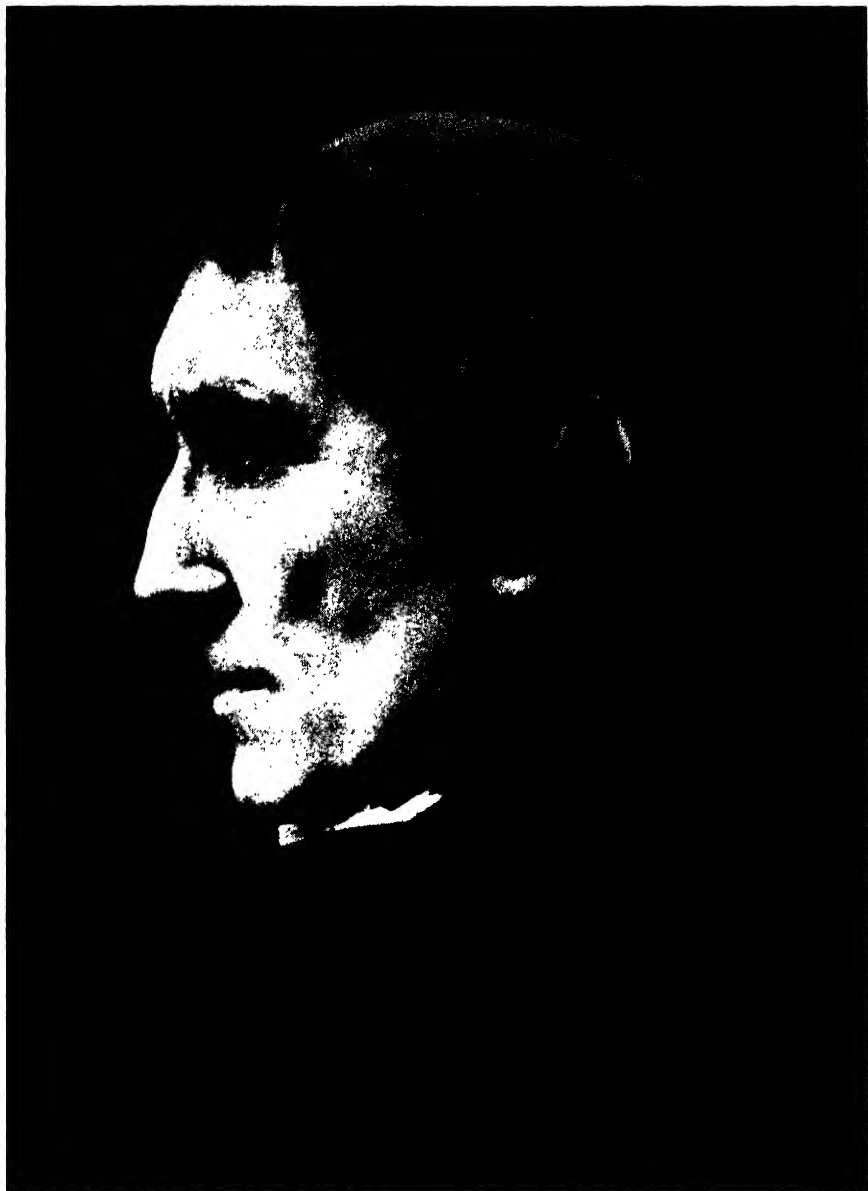
the inhabitants of a continent now submerged ; from these coincidences of ethnology, sidereal astronomy, and known eccentricities of the earth's motion, he deduced the immense age of man upon the globe. He declared that testimony of many kinds continually confirmed his contention of the immense antiquity of man, and gave as an instance the discovery of pottery in the Delta of the Nile at a depth that implied forty thousand years, estimated by the annual deposit of the flooding Nile. Remains of ashes and human implements had been found, he said, in caves under stalagmite, that had taken fifty thousand years to form. All this I was pleased to hear, as it seemed to confute the idea that we are only sublimated monkeys, or, at any rate, to push those simian progenitors so far away in the past as to render them the less offensive. The sun was setting in splendour after the rain when we emerged from the museum, and I realised that to look into the glory of the golden cloud mountains ranged along the horizon was, after all, more uplifting and satisfying to the soul than all the museums in the world with their stone and bronze hatchets.

Sir HENRY IRVING.

MR. BIRRELL has written a striking paper on the profession of an actor in his "Obiter dicta." He maintains that "no man of lofty genius or character has ever condescended to remain an actor," and he adds that "the representation of feigned emotions called up by sham situations, is, in itself, an occupation an educated man should be slow to adopt as the profession of a life."

This is a view of the matter that perhaps accounts for the depreciatory attitude taken by the world for long ages towards actors.

It may perhaps be conceded that where a play, considered as a work of letters, is of indifferent merit and is merely intended to entertain a lazy public for an evening, the actor fills a position no more dignified than the novelist who performs a similar service to indolent minds, but where the object of the



SIR HENRY IRVING
AS BECKETT.

actor is to interpret and illumine a great masterpiece of Shakespere, or even of lesser but illustrious writers, he can surely claim to deserve something of such respect as is universally conceded to the painter who interprets and illumines the beauty of the world, or the great actions of man, or the imagined aspect of the saints and angels. But while the painter is after all a creator of his picture, the actor creates nothing, and only represents or mimics greatness, whereas a great man in the world is the sole architect of his own greatness.

If all this be conceded it remains a truly splendid achievement adequately and gloriously to interpret the greatest works of literature, and this splendid achievement Irving magnificently accomplished.

It was my happiness and privilege to be his friend for the last twenty-five years of his life, and to be welcomed at the Lyceum at all times, both in front and behind the curtain.

He was a man who must inevitably have

risen to the highest places in any profession or in any field of human effort and achievement. There was a dominance in his character and in his bodily presence that must have carried him forward and upward with regnant ease in any walk of life.

In private life his countenance was sombre and arresting, his deep inscrutable eyes lent a mystery to his aspect, and as he grew old and grey, the leonine hair and strange pallor added a noble distinction to his presence. In his discourse with those about him he had a sweet courtesy and a gentle repose; he had a faultless sense of honour and a loyalty to his friends that nothing could deflect.

He was a gallant man, passing through life encountering overpowering difficulties with indomitable courage, utterly indifferent to any financial considerations, his whole soul concentrated upon his art and its glory.

Nothing he could do or spend for Shakespere was ever checked by the slightest hesitation.

To raise to magnificence the presentation of his masterpieces was the absorbing occupation of his mind and heart.

In this splendid enterprise he spared nothing, either of expense or of bodily labour, or of personal devotion. He travelled to Italy to learn on the spot the appropriate atmosphere for "The Merchant of Venice." He went to Germany on the same quest two years before he produced his version of "Faust"

There can be no doubt that he owed much in his splendid career to his acquisition of Ellen Terry as his fellow player in all his greatest productions. Throughout her early life she had been associated with persons of great literary and artistic cultivation; and in this she possessed a privilege which Irving had not had the good fortune to enjoy, and to their joint endeavours Ellen Terry was able to bring all the refinement and culture of her own up-bringing. Her broad familiarity with letters and art were an invaluable addition to their united adventures, and in the result a

long succession of Shakespere's greatest plays were proffered to the world with a level of perfection never before attained upon any stage.

They had their reward, and won for themselves the fervent love of the public, which was frequently expressed on first nights in a manner inexpressibly touching.

I have seen them stand together on the stage while the whole house was filled with tumultuous cheering till Ellen Terry's beautiful eyes were filled with tears at so moving a welcome.

And here comes the sadness of all triumphs upon the stage, however splendid. To those of us who witnessed them they become but a memory, and to others but a tradition. Gone is the glory, gone as are the glowing colours and lovely exhalations of a sunset in some "far perished summer by the sea."

When the last curtain has been rung down on some majestic achievement of passion and beauty, and the players have passed from our

sight, in a moment it is all as though it had never been ; gestures that thrilled, and tones that melted, the heart, actions that exalted the soul, are nothing but a lingering vision of the mind, quickly fading into something no more substantial than a dream.

As I sat not long ago on a bench in the Abbey, and watched the golden letters of his name glimmering at my feet in the darkening twilight, where his dust reposes beside that of Garrick, and recalled the day when his laurelled coffin was lowered into the earth, it was consolatory to reflect that to lie in such a place is to receive such immortality as it is in the power of England to confer upon its most illustrious sons.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

AMONG distinguished Victorians I think it is quite proper to class the American poet and critic, James Russell Lowell, who for some years represented the United States in London, and became so fond of England as to live much of his time here, after he had ceased to be the American Minister.

In appearance he was quite without any nobleness of carriage or feature. He had elected to conceal everything but his eyes and nose with a very abundant growth of hair. His mouth, which is the real seat of a man's expression, was never seen; and even at meals it merely served as a shapeless opening in the screen, into which food was injected with that risk of unsucccess which was necessarily its concomitant.

In his earlier years in his own country, before he became a constant dweller in England,

he did noble service with his pen for the cause of the North and the freedom of the slaves—

“ Is true freedom but to break
Fetters for our own dear sake ?
And with leathern hearts forget
That we owe mankind a debt ?
No ! True freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,
And with heart and hand to be
Earnest to make others free,”

and in those days also he wrote the “ Biglow Papers ” in the language of America, and thus was both grave and gay with equal ease and success.

When I knew him the fine brave enthusiasm of his early poems had dulled into a frigid measured criticism, and his merry spirit had also suffered from the hard hand of time, and had subsided into something more dry and bloodless.

The cultivated American has not the divine gift of laughter that carries the Englishman on his way rejoicing. He knows nothing of the

“ Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter, holding both his sides.”

His wit is dry, and unaccompanied by congregated hilarity. He has not "the flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table in a roar." And so I often observed Lowell at my father's table remaining imperturbable when all but he rocked with laughter at some delightful absurdity contributed by one of the guests. Doubtless he relished the joke as well as the rest of us, but he was denied the capacity for expressing it in the hearty, sanguine, English fashion.

His books of criticism display a wide and precise knowledge of letters, and a determined and measured judgment, untouched by prejudice and unilluminated by enthusiasm. Of "Alexander's Feast," which has been accepted by generations of English critics as one of the noblest odes ever penned in our language, he speaks in contempt, and alludes to "its slovenly metre and awkward expression," and to "the vulgarity of conception of too many passages" in it. But I expect Dryden will nevertheless survive.

He frequently says much in a few words, which confers a felicity to any man's style. He says, for instance, of Pope, that "measured by any high standard of imagination he will be found wanting; tried by any test of wit he is unrivalled."

He was an omnivorous reader, and was familiar with the literature of the Continent as well as with that of England; but with him reading indeed made a full man, as Bacon remarked, although it never seemed to warm his heart.

Like other very well-read men, he sometimes trusted to his memory for a quotation and was betrayed by it. He speaks in one of his essays of "Goldsmith famous verse," and then quotes it as being—

"Remote, unfriendly, solitary, slow."

which quite misrepresents the meaning, for Goldsmith is speaking of himself, and, of course, wrote "unfriended." Lowell can hardly have imagined that the poet would call himself "un-

friendly,” and, therefore, though he alludes to the line as “famous,” he can only have distantly remembered it by its sound and not by its meaning.

In another essay, that on Pope, he quotes from Wordsworth, what he himself calls, “one of his own finest lines,” and quotes it with gross inaccuracy thus :

“The light that never was on land or sea,”
which shows that he did not know the stanza in which it occurs, for as he quotes the line it could not rhyme!

As a distinguished author and Minister from the United States, Lowell was received and appreciated in London Society. He found the life here so entirely congenial to him that he remained in London for long periods of time after he had ceased to be America’s representative, and he was at so little pains to conceal his preference for England that his fellow-citizens in the United States were a little apt to take umbrage at his neglect of his own country.

He lived here in the days before motor-cars, and before the inhabitants of London developed what we now know as the "Week-end" habit. Sunday then was a great social opportunity. On that day artists received in their studios; the ladies of great houses were at home to their friends; and throughout the week almost all the year round Londoners gave dinner parties in their own houses. No one ever asked their friends to meals at hotels and paid their bills there for them as is now so often the custom. Into all this life Lowell entered with pleasure, and was welcomed everywhere as a distinguished man of letters. He was made an honorary member of the Athenæum and many other clubs. He lived in a modest house in Lowndes-square, pretending to no wealth of his own, and in the enjoyment of the exiguous allowance the great and wealthy Republic affords its foreign representatives.

The United States, having no official residence for its Minister in England, the house

that becomes the Embassy varies from a palace, such as Dorchester House, to any little dwelling in the West-End, according to the private means of the selected individual.

It was generally understood that Lowell's wife did not accompany him to dinner parties, and it was assumed, therefore, that she was an invalid.

He was a man of many friends, but few intimates. A detached intellectual character, unlikely to attract affection, but certain to receive hospitality in English Society in the Victorian times. Among the mellow intonations around him at London parties his voice was harsh, but he was a pleasant talker. He never condescended, but was even, suave, and courteous to old and young alike.

NOTABLE CHURCHMEN OF THE REIGN OF VICTORIA.

MY father and my grandfather belonged to what, in the early part of the Nineteenth Century, was called the High Church party. My grandfather, Sir John Coleridge, was the intimate friend of Keble and wrote his life ; and my father, at Oxford, was much under the influence of Newman before he left the English Church for Rome. In my youth I was, therefore, often in the company of Dean Stanley, Dean Vaughan, Master of the Temple, and Dean Church, of St. Paul's, and these three were, in their time, a very distinguished trio of Churchmen. My uncle, Father Coleridge, of Farm Street, was of course a constant visitor, as was Temple, the Archbishop, who occupied in youth the same staircase at Balliol with my father. The two Cardinals, Newman and Manning, were often at 1, Sussex Square, and many other ecclesiastics of note enjoyed the hospitalities and intimacies

of that house that was for so long my home.

Of Manning and Newman I have already written, but some of my memories of those other famous ecclesiastics may be of interest, as there must be few now left alive besides myself who knew them familiarly.

Dean Stanley was reputed to exercise considerable influence with Queen Victoria, and among the scholars and men of letters of his time was regarded not only with esteem but affection; I have heard Matthew Arnold allude to him as "the little dear," and his kindness was apparent to all who approached him.

On one occasion, when I was up from Cambridge and lacked experience of the world, Dean Stanley dined at 1, Sussex Square, and after dinner, ascending the stairs to the drawing-rooms I found myself by his side, and desiring to say something pleasant remarked that I believed I had been at school with his son—mistaking him for Church, Dean of St. Paul's,

having heard him called Mr. Dean all through dinner—whereupon he stopped and looked at me appraisingly, at first with some annoyance and then with indulgence as observing my disingenuous youth, and then said “Young man, Lady Augusta has never blessed me with children,” and seeing my blushing distress at having made so hopeless a blunder, as I tried to explain that I had taken him to be Dean Church, he smiled at me, patted me on the back, and taking my arm in a most kindly way came up into the drawing-rooms thus linked with me, and did not leave me till he had made me forget my stupid mistake.

After Lady Augusta had died, the Dean seemed to have lost his hold on the things of life, and I remember when dining at the Deanery of St. Paul’s where he was expected as a guest, after a wait of half an hour and an abandonment of any hope of his arrival, he drifted in, half way through dinner, and seemed pathetically absent minded after he had been

welcomed and had taken his place at the table. This was not long before his death.

Dean Vaughan, Master of the Temple and Dean of Llandaff, combined a great influence for good in both his fields of endeavour with a gentle but penetrating irony. He could utter biting sarcasm in so soft and silky a tone of voice, that the victim not seldom failed to perceive what was happening to him.

When at Llandaff he rather eclipsed the Bishop and the local ecclesiastics.

The Archdeacon and the Dean were both dining at the palace on one occasion when I was present, and whether it was that Vaughan imagined that the Archdeacon was really no scholar or for some other reason, he listened with apparent humility to the archidiaconal discourse until the daring cleric made a Greek quotation, whereupon Vaughan murmured softly "Dear me, Mr. Archdeacon, that sounds like Greek."

On a more famous occasion he polished his irony upon Chief Justice Cockburn. The latter, when presiding at the trial of the Tichborne claimant, desiring to make a fine summing up, suffered from a convenient indisposition at the conclusion of the Counsels' speeches in order to have time to prepare it. The newspapers daily reported his condition, and in the middle of his illness there came a grand day at the Middle Temple, and the Chief Justice fortunately enjoyed a temporary recovery that enabled him to appear at the pleasant gathering; as he came up the hall, the Master appeared to step forward with delight to welcome him, and, taking the Chief's hand in both of his own, he exclaimed:—"How delightful, Chief Justice, that you have recovered sufficiently to be with us tonight," then in a pretended aside that everyone could hear he added "you will let me have an early copy of the summing up, won't you?"

Mrs. Vaughan was Dean Stanley's sister, and was a most interesting woman; one of her

diversions was to collect ghost stories, and whenever my own attendance on circuit at Cardiff coincided with Dean Vaughan's residence at Llandaff I carried to Mrs. Vaughan any ghost story I had come across.

As I look back at those days I wonder whether I was often used by the Dean as a strop upon which to polish his wit. I can quite believe that in my simplicity I may have so suffered without being myself aware of it!

There can be no doubt that in the Victorian times distinguished churchmen wielded an influence in polite and learned society altogether more potent than is exercised by dignitaries of the church today.

The world now cares for matters to which the church pays but little attention. I have attended a Church Congress and discovered that such a question as the relations of man to animals and the principles that should guide us in our treatment of them was one which was refused a hearing.

The English people in these present times care more for questions of human conduct than for the questions that absorb the minds of the clergy. They care but little for disputes about the origin of man in the depths of an incalculable past, or about the precise meaning of the words "real presence," and these matters to which they are comparatively indifferent form the great subjects of solemn debate among the prelates and decorated ministers in the churches.

Those who are striving to abolish the evil customs and actions of man are, as in past time, men and women unconsecrated to their task by any power of ritual other than their own vigorous minds and beating hearts.

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE.

I DO NOT remember anyone in my lifetime who commanded more enthusiastic admiration, or provoked more deep distrust, in public life than Mr. Gladstone. His opponents were quite convinced that his course in politics was dictated by the most disingenuous opportunism; they pointed to his conversion to Home Rule synchronising most conveniently with the Irish members' arrival in the House of Commons in sufficient numbers to support successfully whichever of the two historic parties would concede Home Rule. They contrasted his whirlwind eloquence over the woes of the Bulgarians and his indifference to the tragic fate of Gordon, his own countryman, who died alone in the Soudan for the honour of England, and, deduced that the whirlwind was fanned more by a desire to stultify Disraeli's policy than by a heart-torn sympathy for the distant Bulgars.

These questions of the ultimate motives of Gladstone's actions and policies open up matters of the psychology of the human mind that are not possible to fathom. It is indeed almost certain that he did not himself fathom them.

But anyone who had the opportunity, as I had on occasion, of being in his company, must have soon been entirely convinced that it never for a moment entered his own consciousness that he could possibly be acting as an opportunist in any policy he adopted.

His superb eloquence and concentrated earnestness were enveloped in an impregnable simplicity and transparent innocence of heart which made it impossible for those about him to entertain the least suspicion of guile, or to doubt for a moment his singleness of purpose.

His very aspect made it impossible to question the implacable nature of his convictions. He possessed

“The front of Jove himself;

An eye like Mars to threaten and command.”

In his dominant presence all must have been convinced of his absolute purity of intention and rectitude of action.

Such was his austere aversion from all the little mendacious amenities in the world about him, that, being told by Goschen that Disraeli, at the Academy banquet, had with much humour declared that the pictures around the room showed that the art of England equalled, if not surpassed, that of any age or country, the eagle eye flashed fire, and the great man exclaimed: "Do you mean to say he carried his ghastly insincerity within those walls? It's hellish!" Disraeli himself, when taxed with having rather overdone it and spoken in hyperbole, replied: "Ah, well! Must be pleasant, you know, after dinner."

So perfect was Gladstone's conviction that in all his words and deeds he was acting in accordance with Divine sanction and as the humble instrument of an inscrutable Providence that he was the last great Minister in England

who could and did, in his terminal flights of eloquence in the House of Commons, call upon Almighty God to bless his efforts; and no man who heard him could doubt for a moment the burning sincerity of this invocation.

Even if his detractors can with some justice declare that his conversion to Home Rule permitted the appearance of an opportunist change of mind, I imagine that the most inveterate of them cannot now avoid the admission that had his Home Rule Bill been passed by the House of Lords a long train of subsequent disasters would very probably have been prevented.

In private life nothing could be more charming than his entire absorption in whatever was at the moment being discussed, wholly without any assumption of superior wisdom. I have seen him talking earnestly with a little boy from Eton really anxious to learn from him all about the current customs at school, and the games, and such matters as how far

up in the school a boy must arrive before he may walk abroad with his umbrella unrolled.

I do not think his literary criticisms were as valuable as one might have expected from so ripe a scholar. He wrote me a letter of quite superlative praise, which, alas, was not shared by the rest of the world, of a book I published in 1892. The little volume just struggled to a second edition, and then disappeared from view.

Somehow his great speeches that moved the world at the time of their delivery have not taken their place among the imperishable glories of English prose. The grandeur of his presence, the splendid tone of his rich voice, the forceful dignity of his gesture, the glamour of the great occasion are lacking from the cold page of Hansard—and perhaps it is in accordance with some law of recompense that to the great orator in Parliament is given the immediate acclaim of the greatest audience in the world, while to the great writer comes more slowly,

but with more inevitable certainty, the reward of a perhaps more enduring fame.

When all his combats were over and he was brought to lie among the great statesmen of the past in the Abbey, at the conclusion of the obsequies, when his bereaved widow stood at the foot of the grave, a very beautiful and graceful act of the Prince of Wales moved the immense and silent gathering to a deep emotion. The Prince stepped forward and kissed the hand of the lonely woman, thus conveying to her the homage of England in her sorrow.

GENERAL GORDON.

ONE of the most glorious, if not the most glorious figure of the reign of Victoria is that of Charles George Gordon of Khartoum. To me he has always seemed to be the most superb and knightly character that the British Army has ever produced. When twenty-two years old he fought in the Crimea, and was wounded in the trenches before Sebastopol. Ten years later he went out to China, and by his character and ability won for himself the devotion of the Chinese soldiers he commanded, and completely suppressed the Taiping rebellion. He led them with only a little rattan stick in his hand, and seemed to bear a charmed life, always exposing himself and never receiving a scratch.

He refused all rewards from the Emperor of China, except a peacock's feather and a yellow jacket. The English Government never understood him, and never began to appreciate

his stainless mind and heart. If anything was endeavoured to be forced upon him which seemed to him touched with the slightest taint of dishonour he instantly resigned whatever post he held.

When in England he lived in complete poverty and as obscurely as he could. He would give his last shilling to anyone who he thought needed it more than himself. Once when a beggar accosted him on his doorstep he left him in the passage while he searched his bedroom for some money to give him. On coming down again he found the man had gone, taking an overcoat from the stand inside the door. In a few minutes the man was brought back by a policeman who had seen him coming out in a hurry with the coat. Gordon asked the man if he really wanted the coat, and the thief, of course, said he did. "It's all right, constable," said Gordon. "I wish him to keep the coat." The constable and the thief departed, both, no doubt, thinking Gordon was out of his mind.

Throughout his whole life he practised Christianity as he believed it should be practised by anyone who accepted the teaching of Christ literally as set out in the Bible. When he had nothing else to give away he gave away his medals. Such a man was certain to find himself constantly misunderstood and regarded as incurably eccentric by Government authorities and trained diplomatists. In their view no one could foretell what Gordon would do or not do, and it was unwise, and running risks to entrust him with any public mission.

But the great British public held a kind of dim conviction that he was a wonderful, inexplicable, splendid personality, and when the garrisons in the Soudan were in jeopardy of being cut off by the Mahdi and massacred, a powerful demand for Gordon as the one man to extricate them ran through England, and he was entrusted with the desperate enterprise. Thwarted in his desire to go through alone on a camel to the Mahdi and interview him, he

was left to stand a siege with only two or three other Englishmen, whom he sent away down the river before the end. Beyond everything else he was able to command men, and by his astonishing influence he held Khartoum month after month against the whole power of the Mahdi. Lord Kitchener, who was not a man to exaggerate in his praise of anyone, said "The memorable siege of Khartoum lasted 317 days, and it is not too much to say that such a noble resistance was due to the indomitable resolution and resource of one Englishman." He would never go down the river to safety and leave those behind, who had trusted him, to be massacred by the Mahdi. He stayed and was slain at his post. The last words of his diary were: "I have done my best for the honour of our country. Good-bye."

I have already in a former paper alluded to Gordon having treasured a copy of Cardinal Newman's "Dream of Gerontius" when at Khartoum. He had marked the following

passage in the poem:—

Rouse thee, my fainting soul, and play the man,
And through such waning span
Of life and thought as still has to be trod
Prepare to meet thy God.
And while the storm of that bewilderment
Is for a season spent
And, ere afresh the ruin on me fall,
Use well the interval.

Can we not imagine him, alone, after the last European had gone down the river and left him, reading these lines and applying them to himself? In his last hours, as throughout his life, he possessed an unalterable faith in God, and always turned to the Bible to solve his doubts and strengthen his heart.

This simpleness of soul has been made the object of raillery by a young neo-Georgian, who has written a mocking character sketch of Gordon in a recent widely circulated volume. Whether we share his faith or not, it is surely a thing that in Gordon we can respect.

Great men have been found to yield to

Gordon an admiration reaching to reverence. Li Hung Chang, the greatest Chinaman of his time, when he visited London drove to Trafalgar Square as his first act in this country, alighted from his carriage, advanced with slow steps to the foot of Gordon's statue, and there before the whole world made three low obeisances before it.

Sir William Butler, a brother soldier and brother Christian, wrote something of Gordon when he perished that may be set against the scoffs of the young gentleman who never saw Gordon and had no knowledge of soldiering or war.

The dust of Gordon is not laid in English earth, nor does even the ocean, which has been named Britannia's realm, hold in its vast and wandering grave the bones of her latest hero.

Somewhere, far out in the immense desert, whose sands so often gave him rest in life, or by the shores of that river which was the scene of so much of his labour, his ashes now add their windswept atoms to the mighty waste of the Soudan.

But if England, still true to the long line of her martyrs to duty, keep his memory precious in her heart—making of him no false idol or brazen image of glory, but holding him as he was, the mirror and measure of true knighthood—then better than in effigy or epitaph will his life be written and his nameless tomb become a citadel to his nation.

There is a recumbent statue of Gordon in St. Paul's Cathedral, and upon it is inscribed the finest epitaph in the world :

He gave his strength to the weak, his substance to the poor, his sympathy to the suffering, his heart to God.

QUEEN VICTORIA.

IT SEEMS, perhaps, appropriate that I should conclude these memories of the great Victorians I have known with a few words concerning the Queen in whose reign they lived and whose reign they adorned.

I am not a courtier, though in defence of the Crown of England I should, if ever necessary, be ready to make any sacrifice a man can face.

Like others of my own age, I have been able to observe with interest the public utterances and actions of three successive occupants of the Throne.

Of the present Monarch it would be impertinence of me to write, but I may, perhaps, as a man of letters, be permitted to say that, in the speech he delivered in May, 1922, at the vast cemetery of Terlinchthun, he reached a level of simple majesty that has

placed him for ever among the great masters of English prose.

The great Queen has of late been subjected to the ignoble tattle of a contemporary and the cheap depreciation of a clever young writer who was only twenty years old when she died.

The old gossip is really less offensive than the ingenious younger man, whose method of depreciating the Queen is to jeer at her being the mother of many children, and to describe her as laughing "till she shows her gums."

Steele once said that "There is a race of men who take a secret pleasure in levelling an eminent character to their own condition, and keep themselves in countenance, though they are excelled in a thousand virtues, if they can make a great man seem common and undistinguished."

No one alive, still less anyone who is dead, can protect himself or be protected against this form of depreciation, except by remaining obscure through life.

Queen Victoria fulfilled in a conspicuous manner all the obligations of a wife and a mother. She presented to the world an abiding and immovable influence exercised towards purity of private life and dignity in State affairs.

The respect for the Throne and its stability as an institution had suffered some shrewd blows from the life and habits of George IV, but by her simple goodness and great discretion the Queen established the Monarchy, and left it at her death secure upon foundations more stable than military force, and more profound than dynastic heredity.

I witnessed her progress through London on both of her Jubilees.

At the first she was followed by Frederick, afterwards Emperor in Germany, and his son, now in Holland, whither he fled ingloriously from the field of battle, whose uniform on that occasion left nothing to be desired and was braver than the heart it covered.

But the scene at her last Jubilee was something never to be forgotten; far as the eye

could reach down the long avenues of the roaring multitudes of her subjects, on her slow and glorious way, august, lonely, weeping with an emotion she could not, and did not, attempt to control, she went, blessing her people, and blessed by them from their very heart of hearts.

It was not for nothing that for sixty years she had maintained, till she was old and solitary, with simple dignity and stainless honour the greatest station in the world.

Well, then, let the ancient gossip and modern cynic do their worst. Time will, without doubt, establish the fame of Queen Victoria beyond the reach of these passing detractions, and the literary genius of her subjects will secure her reign as illustrious in the long history of England, rivalling in splendour even that of Elizabeth.

As the world goes on into the unknown future we may be sure that men will look back at the age of Victoria as at a period when men of noble achievement in all forms of human effort adorned and made glorious the most splendid of mortal thrones.

EPILOGUE.

Those readers of the *Western Mail* who have borne with me for so many weeks and have let me tell them something, however brief and inadequate, of a few of the great men who adorned the life of England in Victorian times, will, I hope, in future look back with a kindlier eye upon that departed age.

They will have observed that in the hearts of all those famous men there dwelt an enduring love of beauty—beauty of art, beauty of word, beauty of life.

When his contemporaries talked to Ruskin of the dark ages he pointed to the cathedrals and said: "They have left us their adoration"; and if we, in our turn, are a little apt to look back at the Victorians with a superior smile, let us remember that they all possessed reverence, which seems to be a little neglected in the modern world.

Reverence for something; for loveliness, for glory, for self-sacrifice, for learning—anyway for

something, must be the foundation of all true greatness in man.

The brightest wit, the finest intellect, the most dexterous penmanship will add nothing to wisdom if there is no ultimate venerated object of the heart's desire to inform and sanctify it to man's welfare.

Knowledge perhaps we now have which the Victorians were without, but that knowledge is not necessarily accompanied by greater wisdom, or a more gracious life.

Science has now usurped the dominant place in England formerly occupied by letters. But as science has no concern with, and no authority over, conduct, we have yet to learn whether the change is felicitous or disastrous. Letters are very intimately concerned with conduct, and in the days of its acknowledged supremacy it conferred upon Society a quality that science can never instil—the quality of charm.

[Finis.]

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